

REMARKS

The Examiner found that claims 3, 7-12, 16, 20-25, 29, and 33-38 would be allowed if written in independent form including the requirements of the base and intervening claims. (Third Office Action, pg. 7) Applicants have allowable claims 7, 12, 20, 25, 33 and 38 in independent form to include the requirements of the base and intervening claims to place these claims in condition for allowance. Allowable claims 8, 9, 21, 22, 34 and 35 are in condition for allowance because they depend from one of the allowable amended claims 7, 20, and 33. Claims 3, 10, 11, 16, 23, 24, 29, 36, and 37 are in condition for allowance because they depend, directly or indirectly, from claims 1, 14, and 17, which are patentable over the cited art for the reasons discussed below.

Applicants amended claim 29 to change the dependency to claim 28, similar to the dependency of claims 3 and 16.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 13-15, 18, 19, 26-28, 31, 32, and 39 as obvious (35 U.S.C. §103) over Yosefi (U.S. Patent No. 5,649,220) in view of Hsu (U.S. Patent No. 5,581,691). Applicants traverse for the following reasons.

Independent claims 1, 14, and 27 concern workflow management for creating and delivering output material, comprising: generating a customer record to include fields specifying at least one product, customer preferences, and a selected delivery option indicating a method to deliver generated output material on the product specified in the customer record; adding a job record including a status field to a job status table for the customer record; setting the added job record status to a first status; processing a selected job in the job status table; invoking a first worker if the selected job has the first status; generating, with the first worker, output material from processing the product and customer preference fields in the customer record for the selected job; setting the status for the selected job in the job status table to a second status after generating the output material with the first worker; invoking a second worker if the selected job has the second status; determining, with the second worker, a selected one of a plurality of delivery options from the customer record for the selected job; and transmitting, with the second worker, the output material via the determined delivery option to the customer specified in the customer record.

The Examiner cited col. 8, lines 10-14 and col. 10, lines 32-37 of Yosefi as teaching the claim requirement that the customer record includes a selected delivery option to indicate a method to deliver the generated output material. (Third Office Action, pgs. 2-3) These claims further require that the output material is transmitted to the customer via the delivery option in the customer record. Applicants traverse.

The cited col. 8 of Yosefi mentions that the user can select an artwork preparation device, such as a raster image processor. A menu appears indicating the types of devices the user can select to perform the operation. The cited col. 10 mentions that once the page formed of graphical, textual and raster image elements is rasterized, the produced rastered image file can be stored or utilized to create physical output via a plotter or proffer device.

The cite cols. 8 and 10 discuss how the user may select a technique for generating the output artwork. Nowhere do the cited cols. 8 and 10 anywhere teach or suggest a customer record including a delivery option indicating a method to deliver the output, where the output material is transmitted to the customer via the delivery option. Instead, the cited cols. 8 and 10 concern the device or technique, such as raster image processing, that will be used to generate the artwork output, not a delivery option indicating how the output will be delivered to the customer.

Thus, nowhere do the cited cols. 8 and 10 teach or suggest the claim requirement that a customer record including fields on a product and customer preferences also include a delivery option of how to transmit the output to the customer. Instead, the cited cols. 8 and 10 discuss how the user may select an artwork preparation device, including a raster image processor, to generate the artwork.

The Examiner cited col. 8, lines 1-6 of Yosefi as teaching the claim requirements of invoking a first worker if the selected job has the first status and generating, with the first worker, output material from processing the product and customer preference fields in the customer record for the selected job. (Third Office Action, pg. 3). Applicants traverse.

The cited col. 8 mentions that users, such as artwork designer and production shop workers, use the workflow manager to perform operations listed in the blocks of the workflow. The workflow manager acts as a shell package providing users with a selection of devices to operate. Nowhere does the cited col. 8 anywhere teach or suggest that a first worker is invoked if the job has the first status and then generating output material from processing product and

customer preference fields in a customer record for the selected job. Nowhere does the cited col. 8 anywhere teach or suggest the specific claim requirements of how output material is processed based on a first status associated with the job in the job status table and preferences in a customer record.

The Examiner cited col. 7, lines 38-42 of Yosefi as teaching the claim requirements of: invoking a second worker if the selected job has the second status; determining, with the second worker, a selected one of a plurality of delivery options from the customer record for the selected job; and transmitting, with the second worker, the output material via the determined delivery option to the customer specified in the customer record.

The cited col. 7 mentions that the artwork designer provides job ticket information, such as the title of the job, customer name and address, and that this information is stored in a database. Nowhere does the cited col. 7 anywhere teach or suggest the claim requirement of a second worker invoked if the job has the second status and determining from the customer record a delivery option and transmitting the output material via the determined delivery option. Instead, the cited col. 7 just mentions that a database record indicate the customer name and record.

The Examiner cited Hsu as teaching the claim requirements concerning setting status for jobs in a workflow and modified Yosefi to include this teaching of setting status for jobs. (Third Office Action, pg. 3) Notwithstanding, the cited combination does not teach or suggest the claim requirements concerning the above discussed operations the invoked first and second workers perform and how these workers process a customer record for a selected job in response to certain statuses set for the job.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 1, 14, and 27 are patentable over the cited combination of Yosefi and Hsu because these references, alone and in combination, do not teach or suggest all the claim requirements.

Claims 2, 5, 6, 13, 15, 18, 19, 26, 28, 31, 32, and 39 are patentable over the cited art because they depend from one of claims 1, 14, and 27, which are patentable over the cited art for the reasons discussed above, and because the combination of the dependent claim limitations with the base and intervening claims provide further distinctions over the cited art. Moreover,

the claims discussed below provide still further additional grounds of patentability over the cited art.

Claims 2, 15, and 28 depend from claims 1, 14, and 27 and further require that the first worker generates output material by: accessing at least one content file by processing a database table using values in the customer record associated with the selected job; and generating the content of each accessed file into the output material. The Examiner cited col. 8, lines 7-14 of Yosefi as teaching the additional requirements of these claims. (Third Office Action, pg. 4)

The cited col. 8 of Yosefi discusses a selection menu of artwork preparation devices for the user to select. Upon selecting an operation, another menu appears indicating the devices from which the user can select to perform the desired artwork preparation operation.

Nowhere does the cited col. 8 anywhere teach or suggest the claim requirement of accessing a content file by processing a database table using values in a customer record associated with the job. Instead, the cited col. 8 discusses how the user may select a device to prepare the artwork. Nowhere in the cited col. 8 is there any teaching or suggest of accessing a content file by using values in a customer record to process a database. Further, nowhere does the cited col. 8 anywhere mention generating content accessed from the database into the output using values from the customer record. Instead, the cited col. 8 just discusses how to select an artwork preparation device to prepare the artwork, not use values in a customer record to process a database to access and generate content into the output as claimed.

Accordingly, claims 2, 15, and 28 provide further grounds of distinction over the cited art because the cited art does not teach or suggest the additional requirements of these claims.

Claims 5, 18, and 31 depend from claims 1, 14, and 27 and further require: determining, with the first and second workers, whether an error occurred while processing the selected job; setting, with the first and second workers, the status in the job status table for the selected job to an error status; invoking an error worker if the selected job has the error status; performing, with the error worker, error recovery operations for the selected job; and setting, with the error worker, the status of the selected job to one of the first and second statuses after the error recovery operation. The Examiner cited col. 7, lines 8-20 of Hsu as teaching the additional requirements of these claims. (Third Office Action, pgs. 4-5)

The cited col. 7 of Hsu discusses a compensation routine that is called when an exception occurs, which performs steps to deal with the exception and clean up after the work flow is aborted. Although the cited col. 7 discusses error recovery, nowhere does the cited col. 7 anywhere teach or suggest the claim requirements of setting the status of the selected job to one of the first and second statuses after the error recovery operation, where according to the base claim, the first and second statuses are used to determine whether to invoke a first or second worker to process the job. Instead, the cited col. 7 concerns a "clean up" after a work flow that is initiated by a human operator after some failure. (Col. 7, lines 20-24)

Accordingly, claims 5, 18, and 31 provide further grounds of distinction over the cited art because the cited art does not teach or suggest the additional requirements of these claims.

The Examiner rejected claims 4, 17, and 30 as obvious (35 U.S.C. §103) over Yosefi, in view of Hsu in view of Milsted (U.S. Patent No. 6,345,256). Applicants traverse because claims 4, 17, and 30 depend from claims 1, 14, and 27, which are patentable over the cited art for the reasons discussed above and because the additional requirements of these claims in combination with the base claims provide further grounds of patentability over the cited art.

Conclusion

For all the above reasons, Applicant submits that the pending claims 1-39 are patentable over the art of record. Applicants submit the fees for the one-month extension of time and the claim amendments increasing the number of independent claims. Nonetheless, should any additional fees be required, please charge Deposit Account No. 50-0563.

The attorney of record invites the Examiner to contact him at (310) 553-7977 if the Examiner believes such contact would advance the prosecution of the case.

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